

your mynde. The waye that you haue entred, is the very right true waye vnto saluacion. Thus seeze you haue proceeded forwarde by the goodnes of God. Continue still stedfastly throughte his helppinge ayde, tyll you attayne vnto the victorious rewarde of lyfe that neuer shall dye. The congregation of the chrystianes commende them vnto you, euen the congregacion whome God hath chosen out to himselfe together with you in Babilon, whiche in the myddes of wicked ydolatrious folowe the godlynes of the gospell and in myddes of most fylthye corrupte livers embrace the purities of cleane conuersacion. You are not alone by your selues, God hath his cherte in euery place: In bede those are but a very fewe, howbeit they are a synely teped seede to increase the congregacion in tyme commynge more largely. Parke saluteth you, whiche is to me as it were my sonne. Salute you euery one other with a kyss, not after the sorte that is geue more custumely than hartely, but with an holy pure, a true chrystian mynde, which is not doone against the hearte, but is the signe of a chaste and a pure vpright loue, and not a lyeng countrefaite token. And to make an ende of myne Epistle to lyke sorte as I beganne it, Grace and peace be alwayes present with you al, which being engrassed vnto the bodye of Iesu Christ, true by his spirite, that grace maye couple you vnto God, and peace maye glewe you together with mutual concord: whiche thing God, that is best and most myghty, bypynge to passe. Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the paraphrase vpon the
first Epistle of S. Peter
thapostle.

The argument vpon the later Epistle of S. Peter thapostle: by D. Erasmus of Ro- terodame.



This Epistle, as it appeareth, Peter wrote, when he was greatly growe in age, and almost at the pites brinke, for in bede he maketh mention of his death. He writeth generally to all sortes of chrystianes, exhortinge them to purities of lyfe, and by auncient examplis and with the terrour of the laste iudgement frayeng them from fylthynes: and he doeth vehemently blame them, whiche corrupte the myndes of the simple with petuerse doctrine,

in denyng the commynge of Christ.

¶ Thus endeth the Argument.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the later Epistle of S. Peter the apostle.

The first Chapter.

The text.

¶ Simon Peter, a servant and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to them which haue obtained the precious faith with us through the righteousness of our God and saviour Jesus Christ. Greete he vnto you, and peace be multiplied vnto you the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. According as his godly power hath geuen vnto vs all things that pertaine vnto lyfe and godlye life, through the knowledge of him that hath called vs by glory and vertue, by the which are geuen vnto vs, excellent and most great promyses, that by the means thereof ye might be partakers of the godly nature, of ye the corruption of worldly iudg.



P Simon Peter; in thyne past a diligent follower of Moses law, and now a seruant and Embassadour of Jesus Christ, whose gospel (eue as þ day light) dispeth and dyeth away all the shadowes of the olde testament, writte vnto all maner of men without parciall exception either of people, or religio, either of kynde, or state, or yet condition. For we esteeme all people to be kynnesfolkes and most nere lyfyned vnto vs, whosoer haue deserued to be made like vnto vs in the profession of the faith of the gospel by the which, we haue attayned true rightuousnes, not by circumcision, or by sacrifices of the lawe, but by the goodnes of our God, and by the deathe of our saviour Iesu Christ, who hath frely pardoned vs our olde synnes, so thant we should hence forth folowe gospellye rightuousnes, which dooth not consist in ceremonies, but in true goodnes of mynde: a hath a certayne sorte greater perfectio than the Jewes rightuousnes, whiche is nothinge but a shadowe of true rightuousnes. And I praye, þ lyke as you haue yet hitherto gon aboundantly forwarde in the grace of þ gospel, alwayes somewhat augmentyng in thence of goodnes, a drawyng nere brotherly con corde amonge your selues daylye more and more: so the liberrall goodnes of God woulde vouchsafe to make perfite his gyftes in you; which Jewelles increase so much þ more largely in you, as you grow forwarde into þ knowledge of God þ father, a of his sonne our Lord Iesu Christ, the acknowledginge of whome is eternall lyfe. For it is the chiefe poynte of saluation, to acknowledge the autho; of saluation, that we chalenge no parte thereof to our owne desertes and strengthes, or to the prescripcons of Moses lawe, inasmyche as whatsoever is pertainyng to true lyfe, and whatsoever belongeth vnto true godlynes, his diuine power hath bestowed it vnto vs, without helpe of circumcision, onely by faith, whereby we acknowlage God the father, from whome proceede all thinges, and Iesu Christ, by whome onely we haue all thinges geuen vnto vs. These thinges are not geuen throughe our merites, but by his free vounteous gyfte, whiche of his owne accorde hath called vs vnto the benefite of saluation: and to them that were boide of glo; and vertue, he hath bestowed bothe his owne glo; and vertue: to thintent that whereas being ad-burde vnto our owne vicious naughtines, lyke vnto the vile slaues we serued ydoles, we shoulde be engrafted vnto Christe, and be made bothe pure and glo;

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rious, hauing þ̄ wickednes taken out of the waie, wherein we were fylthily so-
led. He hath translated our vile naughtines vpon himselfe, that he mighte
chooſe vs of his owne free pleasure into þ̄ fellowship of his glory: Our trespat-
ſes he hath taken vpon himselfe, that we might enioie his innocencie. Howe
these same are very great matters, but those are farre greater of a muche more
excellencie, that are promysed vs in tyme to come, not by the lawe of Moses, as
we haue often sayed before, but by thacknowledging of Iesu Christ. But what
is it, that is promysed? Forsoothe that albeit you perceyue not to the kyndredde
of the Jewes, yet you maye be made w̄ them compassions of the diuine nature
beyng choſen into the nombre of þ̄ chylden of god, to possesse thenceforthe, of
immortal lyfe, so that you set your study vpon a certayne immortalitye by vncor-
rupte conuersation in the meane season here in this worlde, and free from al cor-
ruption of vices and naughtie lustes wherewith a mynde that is infected, tēdeth
to curstastinge deathe.

¶ And beynge greue all diligence i in your faithe myndes vertue in vertue knowledg in
knowledg temperaunce, in temperaunce pacience: in pacience godlynesse: i in godlynesse
prouerby synneresse: in p̄ouerby synneresse loue. For yf these thinges be amonge you, and
be p̄uocous, your myll make you that ye herbes that be pole not vnto the tūll in the knowe
ledge of our x. oide Iesus Christ. But be that lacketh these thinges, is blind and gropeth
for the waie with his hande, and hard to forgetten þ̄ he was pouged from his oide synnes.

It be next.

God hath once geuen innocencye frely, and it is not enoughe to mainteine
it, but applyng withall studious diligence, endeuour your selues to be made
rich in well doinges, that your faithe be not vyle, but that it be accompanied
with good behauiour, that nothing be doone or sayed, but that whiche is ver-
tuous. Than let good behauiour enterterne knowlage, that you maye not on-
ly folowe the thinges that be vpright, but also discern, what thinge, in what
place amonge whom after what loye, and by what meanes oughte woorthilye
to be done. Let knowledge be accompanied with temperaunce, that the mynde
beyng vnmoueaibly strong against all the wanton enterterments of the worlde,
maye constantlye without shynkyng folowe the thing, that it hath iudged
to be best. Vnto temperaunce let pacience be ioyned, that when you doe well, you
maye chearefully suffer sorowes. For those men, whom the flareringe pleasures
of the worlde doe not bynge in to a lye fygred nicenes, are somtyme broken
with impacient suffring of sorowes, with pacience let godlynes be present, that
what soeuer you doe or suffre, you referre it to the glorye of God. Let godlynes
be accompanied with brotherly charitie, that like as you loue God for himselfe,
euen so for his sake you maye loue all them that professe God. And let brother-
ly charitie be augmented and vphieped with loue to studye to doe good for all
men, not onely them that are godly and Christian folkes, but also for them that
are wicked. These are the frutes of an euangelicall faith, whiche yf you haue
them aboundantlye, shall bynng to passe, that wher you haue acknowledged
our lord Iesus Christ throughe faith, it should not be vnprofitable and vn-
fruitfull vnto you, although you haue nothing to doe with circumcision. For
in these thinges consisteth the whole lumine of Christes godlynes: and yf any
mā want the, he hath professed Christ in vaine, forasmuche as he shodeth backe
from the light of the Gospell in to his oide former darkenes, euen as it were a
blonde man that groapeth the waie with his hande, and is caried aboute here-
awaye and threawaye throughe the mases of woorldly lustes: neither seeth he

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the waye to come to the fellowship of Christ, beyng vntthankfull also for the benefite of Christ, of whome where he is once truly cleansed from his olde transgressions, yet as a man forgetfull of this so exceeding a mercye, he vnder- take to the same againe.

The .xv. ca.

Wherfore brethren, geue the more diligence for to make your callinge and election sure by good workes, for if ye doe such thinges, ye shall neuer fall. Yea, and by this meane an entrance in, shall be ministred vnto you abundantly into the euertlasting kyngdome of our Lord and sauour Iesus Christ. Wherfore, I will not be negligent to put you alwayes in remembraunce of such thinges, though ye knowe them your selues, and be stablished in the present tyme. Notwithstandinge I thinke it meete (as long as I am in this tabernacle) to seeke you by putting you in remembraunce, for as muche as I am sure, that Godly I must put of this my tabernacle, euen as our Lord Iesus Christ shewed me. I will euen also geue my diligence, that ye maye haue wherewith to seeke up the remembraunce of these thinges after my departinge.

And therfore, brethren, let it not make you to lye in a securitie and to be careles, in that the goodnes of God, hath (whan you desired nothing) called you vnto the profession of the gospel, hauinge once pardoned all the synnes of your former lyfe: but endeuour your selues so muche the more, that the goodnes of God, wherewith he hath called you, wherewith he hath chosen you, be not turned to your destruction and heape of damnacion, in case beinge forgetful of his dounteous gentlines, you be troubled barke in to þe same state, from whence he ransomed you with his owne death. But procure rather with well doinges, that God seeme not to haue called and chosen you in vaine. And some parte of this matter lyeth euen in you, for if you consider, from whence God hath called you, to what thinges he hath called you, and what rewardes he hath set for the same for you, and if you will prece the same by these meanes, whiche I haue declared a litle before, you shall neuer slyppe out of the right course of godlynes. For if you prece this waye, Goddes assistinge helpe shall be plenteously present with you, and shall succour you with his riche releyse, that at lengthe beyng conquerours of this worlde, you maye attayne to the euertlastinge kyngdome of our Lord and sauour Iesus Christ, to possesse with him the treasures of heauen, for whose sake you haue set naught by the treasures of þe earth. The reward is exceedinge great, but it must be procured with exceedinge greate diligence. Wherfore I will neuer cease to geue you warnyng of these matters, although I suppose it not necessaie, seynge you both doe and remembre, what you ought to doe: and are also confirmed now by longe processe of godlynes in the acquainted knowledge of the truth a great while, whiche hauinge embraced, you constantlye folowe yet hitherto: notwithstandinge to thintent you maye more and more watche still in that you haue begonue, I recken it my parte, that remembryng my lordes precept, whiche commanded me, þe beyng converted my selfe, I shoulde confirme my brethren, as long as I lyue among you (beyng a stranger vpon earth) in þe tabernacle of this fleshy bodye, I shoulde seeke by a prycke forwarde the studye of godlynes in you, and in deed so muche the more, because I knowe I shall shortly be strypped out of the dwellinge of this fleshy bodye, and chaunge this vile of the earth for þe fraunchised free citie of heauen. For our Lord Iesus Christ signified so vnto me, whome I serue yet hitherto as a souldier in this tabernacle. Nowe therfore I shall geue diligence, that these matters maye in the meane space be so surely fixed in your hearts

harten with often admonicion, that you maye remember them after my deathe, when I can not warne you by worde of mouth. For seeinge the thinge is moost certayne, that you haue receyued of vs, it behoueth you not to swaue from it.

¶ So we haue not folowed heerefull fables, when we opened vnto you the power and conyng of our Lorde Iesus Christ: but with our eyes we sawe his maicestie: when hee was with vs when he created of vs the father honour and glory, and when after came such a voyce to him from the excellent glory. This is my deare beloved sonne, in whom I haue delite. This voyce we hearde come from heaue, when we were with him in the holy mount. We haue also a right sure worde of propheticke, wherunto (ye yet take heed) as vnto a light that shyneth in a darcke place, ye do well with the daye dawne, and the daye dawne eye in your heares. So that ye first knowe this: that no prophete in the scripture hath any private respectiō . For the scripture came neuer by the wyll of man: but holy men of God speake, as they were moued by the holy ghoost.

¶ It is myte.

For our doctrine was not suche gayer, as the philosophers teache, whose bytten is to perswade by craftyly conueyed fables, and humane subtilities, the thinge that they then selues vnderstande not, and bylagge also amonge them selues. But we haue in no wyse folowed these wayes, in openyng vnto you the power and conyng of our Lorde Iesu Christ, and in prayng vnto you his maicestie, whiche we haue seene with these eyes . For he vouchsafed vnto certayne of his owne afore his deathe some special token, with what mightie power and with what glorye he shall once come, to iudge the quicke and the dead, and what wonderfull felicitie he shall geue vnto them, that loue him stedfastlye. For when God the father endued him all wholly with glorye and honour, insomuche that his countenaunce shone as bright as the sunne, and his clothes were more white than the snowe, so farre, that mannes eyes coude not abyde to beholde the heauenly light, and there came also an exceedyng moost honourable testimonie of the fathers voyce, whiche was brought downe from highe vnto him from the glorious maiestie of the father. And it was after this sort: This is my welbeloued sonne, whiche hath delighted my mynde, heare him . There coulde haue ben no witness geuen, eyther more fully or more excellent. And it was pronounced, not of any prophete, but of the fathers owne maicestie . These thinges we haue seene with our eyes, these haue we hearde with our eares, when we were present with him in the holy mount Thabor . It so be that the prophetes playne oracles be in a great weightie estimacion among you, which propheticke by figuratyue darke shadowes of Christ: of much more grauite ought to euidēt a declaracion by the father himselfe of his sonne be . The prophetes agree with the fathers voyce, if a man doe rightly interprete them . They with their promisses prepare as if were mannes myndes to the truth of his gospell, in that they shadowe and as it were courtly point out, the thinge that the gospell doeth openly prayche. Therefore I doe not disallowe, that the Jewes beinge vehementlye giuen to the prophetes prophettenges, like there for the comyng of Messias. For it is a steppe somewhat vnto the sayde of the gospell, to beleue that Christ shoulde come . For a man shall the more sone beleue that Christ is come, if he be perswaded that he shoulde come . Therefore there is good hope of him, that bringe not yet lightened with the light of the gospell, is aduenture vnto the prophetes, as to a candell appearinge in a darcke place. For it is better to haue some light than no light, till the sunne come, and the daye dawne, to dyscuss awaye all darkenes, and to obscure euen that candle.

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bell and that the daye there of gospell preachinge maye shyne bright in your hartes, whiche declarerh that the sonne is at hande. The sayinges of the prophetes are to this bleuysable, yf they that reade them, consider that þe scripture of prophcinge befoze hande is darkly hydden vnder couerte of figures, & can not be vnderstanden without interpretaciõ. And þe is not euery mannes interpretation, nor after euery mannes arbitrement. For the prophetes, whiche spake of thinges befoze hande, did not speake after theire owne vyaine nor after the deuyse of their owne mynde, but wher they were holy men and pure from all humane lustes, þe holy govt inspired their hartes, & vsing them as his instrumetes, he signified his wynde vnto vs by the accoꝝdingly. The thing þe men set foꝝth by mannes deuyse, may be perceaued by mannes wyse. But þe thing þe is set foꝝth by the inspiration of the holy govt, requireth an interpretour inspired with the lyke spirite. They that applye the thing, whiche is spoken of Chyist, vnto any worldlye kyng: they that drawe the thing that is spoken of the lyfe of heauen, vnto the felicitie of this world: they that interpret the thing that is spoken of the treasures of the mynde, of the comodities of this world: doe verye farre swerue from the mistycall meaning of the prophete. Eether are they easilye perswaded that Chyist is come, in that by false interpretation of the prophete, they imagine to them selues a certayne earthlye Messias, suche a one as he shewed not him selfe to be. And for that cause they acknowledge him not, not that he varyeth from the spirituall ymage of the prophete, but that he differeth from the ymagined ybole of falslye leyned interpretation.

The .ii. Chapter.

The .xviii.

¶ There were falsse prophetes also amonge the people, euen as there shall be falsse teachers amonge you, whiche openlye shall spyng in damnable sectes (suche sayyngs the Lorde that vnto bought them) and byyng open them selues swyfte damnation, and many that folowre theie damnable wayes, by whome the waye of sturca & alre capli spoken of, and to some our countourne shall they with falsse wordes make maacquaynt of you, woude swogment is now not facte of, and theie damnation depoynt not.



Whosoever he be, that propheteeth after thaffection of his owne mynde, is falslye named a prophete. Whosoever he be, that interpreteth the prophetes sayyngs, vnto his owne couetous appetites, is a falsse interpretour. There were in tymes past falsse prophetes euen amonge the Jewes, whiche eether to pryke a thanke at þe princes hande or elles for vauntage sake, or for hatred of othre, propheted the thinge, whiche the spirite of God spake not, but that they had in their assemblies imagined them selues. They countrefaicting their behauiour as though they had ben true prophetes, deceaued folyshe people, and reppned against the true prophetes with their lyynges. And so after thy deceasse also there shall arys suche, as shall falslye boaste them selues to be teachers of the gospell, wher as they shall be nothyng else but maisters of falscheade. They shall swarue from the doctrine of the gospell, and bytuge in mennes gloses: in stede of the truth that byyngeth saluaciõ, they shall cloute in pernitious sectes for their owne gayne, that pertaine rather to their owne gloꝝpe and their owne eyaunte, than vnto Chyistes afaire: and they shall goe on till into so great madnesse, that they shall not be afrayed vnkynolpe to denye euen their Lorde Iesus, by whose bloude they were redemed, and whose name they

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they once professed, and shall be more wicked than the very heathens, which neuer professed Christ. By the which their dooings they shall prouoke the vengeance of God vpon them selues, and it shall not onely nothinge auayle them, that they once professed Christ, but they shall also pull vpon them selues speedy destruction, God taking vengeance vpon them. Howbett it were but a small matter, yf none were lost, but onely they, which are already loste, but they shall also drawe many with them into destruction. For false doctrine teachers shall synde disciples of their owne, and bearinge them selues boldly vpon the, they shall not be afrayed to rayle vpon the gospelles truerly which you haue receaued of vs: neither shall they purely handle the worde of the gospel, because they see it maketh nothinge auayleably to their greedynes, but being bent vnto their owne priuate lucre they shall begyle your simple playnnesse with fepned communicacion, not going about to wyne you vnto Christe, but to plucke to them selues the greatest gayne they can from you. For they see that the gospels doctrine is smally pleasaunt vnto them, which are cralled with the delcyces of this worlde, they see it is no wyse delycate matter, so doe as wee doe, besyde the syncretitie of the gospels doctrine constantly against the wicked, throughe all beathes. Therefore shall they desyle the true doctrine of Christ: and in steede of it, they shall teache those thinges, that are pleasaunt to the grosse hearers rather than holisome: and those thinges that purchase them substance and renowme in the worlde and not with God. For they shall couet rather for glorye and pleasure that shall last but a while, to purchase euerlastinge destruction bothe to them selues and to others, than throughe thoyr tormentes of the body to thrust out vnto felicitie that neuer shall die. Beware you solow not those guides, excepte that you wyll goe straight waye into destruction. Rather let it decrease you, in that they are alofte in hyghe estate in this worlde, in that they are riche, in that they lyue at their owne ease. They shall not long haue the fruition of this continuance of false felicitie. For lyke as the godly shall in a while receyue their rewardes, which God hath already decreed long agoe, euen so these mennes payne makerly speedy hast vnto them, nether doeth their destruction slepe that shall sodainly oppresse those that be careles and lyue in a sicurtie. They maye decrease mennes iudgements, but they can not beguyle God. Howsoeuer men, ouer whome they haue autoritie, doe forgeue them, God, which is afrayed of no mans myght wyll not forgeue them.

¶ For yf God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them downe into hell, and deliuered them into chaynes of darthnes, to be punished, to be kept vnto iudgement: neither spared he the olde world, but saved Noe the right preacher of right wysnes, and brought in the fowle vpon the world of the vngodly, and turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes: succubeth them, damned them, and made of them an ensample vnto those that after shoulde lyue vngodly. And iust Lot vexed with the vncleyn conversation of the wicked, deliuered he. For he beinge righteous, and dwelling among them in seying and hearing, saved his righteous soule from daye to daye with their vniuersall behes. The Lord knoweth howe to deliuer the godly out of temptacion, and to rescue the vniuersall vnto the daye of iudgement so to be punished: but chastyse them that walke after the fleshe in the lust of vncleynnes, yf despyse autoritie, presumptuous are they, a stubborn, which seeke not to speake euill of them that excell in mannyng. When the angels which are greater bothe in power and might, receaue not of the Lord saylinge iudgement against them selues. But these as brute beastes, naturally brought forth to be eaten and destroyed, speake euill of the thinges that they vnderstande not, and shall perishe in their awne destruction, and receaue the rewardes of vniuersal wysnes.

¶ The next.

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For why should he spare them now, saying that in tymes past he spared not the very angels, whiche had offended, but threw them downe headlong out of heauen, bounde them with the chaines of their clauynge darks night, and caste them in to the pylon of hell to be reserved to this ende, that hauing sentence of damnacion in the last iudgement, they may be committed to eternal tormetes for euermore: why he suffer ppyde to be unpunished in men, whiche suffered it not in the Angelles? Shall the thing be unpunished in them, that they doe after the sight of the gospel manifestly opened vnto them, & after so many bounteous benefites freely geuen vnto them by him, which spared not the olde world (beyng rude without knowledge) but beyng greued at mennes viciousnes, when the world was vniuersally spotted with wicked maners, he brought the floude vpon it, and dispatched it mankynde, keepinge first, who beyng the egypt parson his will was to haue saued out of so myghtie a great multitude of mortal men, because the religioe hauinge contemned the gentle sustenance of God, he onely in makynge the Arke testified, that he had the vengeance of the Almighty. And wyl not he punyssh the people of these dayes, which with poysoning downe a Noyre of byrnstone, brought so many cities, and so doozynge a countrey of Sodomme and Gomoze into ashes, and marred them so vtterly, that there remaineth nothing, but an horrible and a pestilent stynkyng marriage, for a testimony what payne abyde they, whiche with lyke wickcones prouoke the wrath of God vpon them selues? And lyke as vnto them their owne wickednes was their owne destruction, such so the innocencie of Lot turned to his saluacion: vnto whome when the abominable felowes intended violence, and would with their abominable raging lustes oppresse the chaste godly man, God pulled him out of the companie of the wicked, among whome it was the most greuous payne for him to lyue. For in Asmuhe as he was pure and chaste bothe in eyes and eares, it was a greuous torment for a godly disposed mynde, to heare daily, and see daily, the thinges that he abhorred withall his whole hearte.

By these it is sufficiently declared, that God neuer suffereth, any man to lose the rewarde of his innocencie, neither any mans wickednes to be unpunished: although he gently beate w some for a season, & they might once repent: yea & though he suffer his owne sometime to be repte for a while, yet whā tynce, he can diuer the godly out of forowes: & contrarywise he can reserve the vngodly against the daye of the last iudgement to be punished with eternall tormentes for euermore. No kynde of vnrightheousnes shalbe suffered unpunished. But those shall specially suffer paynes, whiche as it were distrustinge the promises of the gospel, folowe in this worlde that whiche is delectable to the bodye, securyng such outrageous lustes, wherewith they deyle their whole lyfe on euer syde. And that they may be the more wicked, they double their wickednes with violence, & contemne those that be set in publike authority, beyng knacke hardye, and shameles, and are not ashamed to sayle vpon suche as are men of dignitie. And these thinges are wretched men, hardye to doe, where as the Angelles beyng farre more excellent in power and strength, although the otherwise wicked, yet they proceeded not into so muche shameles hardynes as to abyde to speake curll of God: and where as they in other matters neglected the will of God, yet in this point they were asrayed to offende him, and reided vnto thauoytie of god. But these men beyng more vngreacions than the wicked spirites,

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like byrte beastes boyme to thys ende, that they maye bee caught and bestro-
 cd, forasmuche as they are not stayed to backbyte and mystrepute theyr
 superiours: not knowing this in the meane while, for whose sake they speake
 euill of them. Like as they throughe theyr corrupte condicions procure destruc-
 tion to them selues, even so shall they perre like beastes, and receyue a wo-
 rthy reward of theyr wicked life: forasmuche as they taken it a swete and so-
 ly gape life, if they cast all shame quite away, and geue them selues in the open
 daylyght vnto myrthe, riot and filthy voluptuous lusses. For yet they haue
 some shame remainyng with them that doo these thynges in the night.

They count it pleasure to lyue delperously for a season. *The tryte.* *Whiche* they are and tythya-
 nesse, whiche lyue at pleasure in theyr own decepuable wayes, teasyng and frauyng pou-
 rous eyes ful of aduoutry, and that cannot cease from lyue, begyng vnto the soules.
 wherby they haue exercised with cobber. They are curyd collops whiche haue forsaken
 for euill waye, and are gone astray to folowng the waye of Balaam the sonne of Boso, *The*
 whiche found the reward of vngodly welnesse: but was rebuked of thys iniquyte. *The*
 same and dumme beest, speaking with mans voyce for to be the madnesse of the prophete.

Who would beleue that these were menne: They are rather filthy and spo-
 tes, who in their filthy glotonous banquettings (wherin being wretchedly de-
 ceaued they repose the hole myne of felicitie) haunt against you, as though you
 were madde menne, because you haue not the fruition of the commodities of
 thys present life. And in the meane tyme not prouoketh outragious luste, and
 when they are once wyne dronken, they haue beastly lusting eies, neither haue
 they mynde of any thing els, than vpon whozomonyng, and other kyndes of
 wickednes. For they can not, when they haue once cast away reason, when they
 haue ben once dronken with wyne, cease from naughte doing, but they shyppe
 from wickednes to wickednes, so muche that it is not enough for them to lyue
 vngodly theyr selues, except they intangle and allure other mens myndes
 (not yet corrected in vertue) vnto theyr filthynes. How perchance it were moze
 tolerable, if they offended in nothyng but in riot and lecherous lust: But there
 is no kynde of vice but they haue it. Like as they filthily make away that they
 haue, even so filthily doo they prouocoe to make prodigally awaye, haupng a
 mynde and a wytt practised vnto couetousnes, vnto detraite and vnto rauine,
 doing euery thing what so euer it be, for auantage sake: and for such curke the
 good and the goodly, and being corrupte with money swaue from the right
 waye: and in that poynt resemble theyr father Balaam the sonne of Boso, who,
 when he knewe what was best yet being corrupte with wicked fer, he went about
 to curke them, whom God was mercifull vnto: a couetousnes brought him into
 so great a byndnes, & he was rebuked of his alle, & where as he being a madde
 doctour had call of his mans mynde, & byrte beest speaking in a mans voyce
 restrayned the prophetes madnes, being moze w her bodily eyes than he saw w
 & eyes of his mynde because he was aske bynd throughe couetousnes of money.

These are wylde without water clothes that are caught with a tempest, to whom the
 myn of backenes is referred for euill. For when they haue spoken the greates weltyng *The tryte.*
 wordes of wartyr, they entyre thoro the lustre in the voluptuousnes of the fleshe them that
 were cleare escapedeuen them that now lyue in seruand while they promise them libertie,
 wherby as they themselves are the boue seruantes of fornyccion. For of whom a man is
 succome, vnto & same is he brought in doubt age. For yet they (as yet they haue escaped
 & tythynes of the world thoro & knowlege of & Lord & the famous Jesus Chyite) are
 yet tangled agayn therin, & succome, therin & latter ende wille w them for & beginning.
 For it had bene better for the, nor to haue knowen & way of rightewynnes, then a fre they
 haue knowen it, to raine for the holy edmandment that was geuen vnto them. But the
 same is hapned vnto them & is vnto to be spoken by the true promette. The dogge is tur-
 ned to his wome agayn, & & saw & was wartyr is turned agayn to be walyng in & mee.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .ii. Epistle

These are they that promise a certayn wonderfull and newe doctrine, where as they bring nothing worthy the profession of the Gospel, being like welles that lacke water, wherunto if a manne come athurck, he can fynde nothing but mudde and claye: and like vnto mysty cloudes, that are bypnen hither and thither with the strome of wyndes, and sende as they would geue rayne vnto the thurstye grounde, where as for all that, not so much as one droppe of holowme doctrine falleth from them. They promise the lycht of the Gospelles doctrine, and wrape those folkes in darkenes of errors, whom euertyllyng darkenesse abyderth for in hell. For when with their lying woordes they speake of certayn great hgh matters, & with that hope entice and snare them whiche be gyuen to amende theyr condicions, they deceaue them and wrape them in the delites of the flesh, & the voluptuous pleasures of this life, promising that they wil deliuer other fro error, whā they them selues are occupied in the greatesse errors of al, and promising other men deliuerance from synnes, when they them selues are the very bonde slaues of filthynes. For of whosoer a mā is overcome, and at whose appoyntement he lyueth, his bonde seruaunt he is called by right. For it auayleth the nothing at all to haue ben once frely deliuered fro the bondage of synnes, if they fall to the same state agayn by their own accord: but the bondage is so much the more vile, and so much the more wretched, because it is procured without cōstraynt, after the tasting of libertie. That which was done amysse befoze the Gospel preached, is a great parte long of error, and long of Ignorance. But they whiche hauing once acknowledged by the preaching of the Gospel, our lord and sauiour Iesu Christe, haue through Baptisme renounced the filthynes of this world, and professed a pure and an heavenly life: if they be overcome agayn with lustes, and wrapped in theyr olde vncleanesse, theyr baptisme doeth not only nothing helpe the at al, but alle they are in worse state, than they were befoze they knewe Christe. For his offence is the lesse, that synneth through Ignorance. And they shal be the more greuously damned, whiche haue enlarged the crime of wickednes with the vice of vthankfulnes. Therefore it had ben better for them to haue not knowen the Gospelles doctrine at al, whiche teacheth Innocencye and purenes, than after they knewe and receyued it, to swaue from the holy commaundement that was once declared vnto them. For what other thing is befallen them, than that

which is truly said to be spoken by a commune proverbe

The begger asketh by agayn that he hath once cast by,

and the washer some turneth agayn to wash her

selfe in the myx. It is but a lost labour for the

begger to haue purged his Romake with

boinie, if he take agayn that he cast

by. And the some hath washed

away her foule synning

myxe in cleane water

in bayne, if

she, by and by after she is

washed, returne to the

soylenges that she

had gone from.

The. iii. Chapter.

¶ This is the seconde epistle that I now write unto you dearly beloved, wherewith I seek by your sincere mynd, by putting you in remembrance, that ye maye be myndfull of the moyses (which were false before of the holy prophetes) and also the commaunders brought us whiche be apostles of the Xpian and saviour. Wherof first wherof stande, that these wordes come in the same waye moches (in by craftynesse) which will walke after theyr owne iudges, and saye: Wher is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers sayd, all thinges continue in the same estate wherein they were at the beginning. For they they knowe not and that mysfully) he is that the heuens a great while ago were, and that it is out of the water appeared by the same the water, by the moche of word: by the which thinges the moche that then was, perceived, beinge oute runne with water. But the heuens and eare which are now, be kept by the water in the, and receiue none nye agayn the hope of iudgement and perseruation of iustitiam.

The next.

Dearely beloved, these matters I bear in with many moches by to you, and with you in these myne other letters I warne you of the self same thing, not that I doubt of the byghtnesse of your mynd, but that you maye haue in remembrance moze and moze the things that you knowe and hold, and so that you do with the moze hart chearefulness and constant steadfastnes. You shall be in the litle perill of hurting by their ingracious doctrine, if you remembre, that it was spoken of by the holy prophetes in tymes past, whiche gaue warning to beware of this kynde of men. And if you do remembre that we gaue the litle precept, whiche are the Apostles of the lord and saviour Iesu Christ, who sayd that no manne should geue care to such as in the of the Gospelles teach, beinge in pernicious doctrine. This therfore knowe you first of all, that these shall come hereafter, not preachers but mockers, beinge comynly furnished with sleights and subtil deceites, to beguyle the ignorant which shall not folowe those thinges that Christ taught us, but like as their life shall be after the lustes of their owne hart, so shall they teache after their owne appetite, those thinges that shall be sure for such a moche of life. For inasmuche as theyr life is litle, they shall not be desirous of the lordes coming: And for that cause sake shall they perswade bothe to them selves and others, that he shall not come agayn, and saye: where is the promised resurrection: where is the iudgement: where are the lordes payes of rewardes according to the desertes of iustice: when cometh he that is looked for day by day in vayne: for they shall thinke surely that he shall neuer come, because his coming is put of for a tyme. What token (saye they) is there of the resurrection: Our fathers are dead one after an other, and neuer one hath risen agayn to life yet hitherto. And like as since the creation of the world, all thinges are engendred by the interchaungable courses of the byng and of the byng, euen so vnto this tyme remaineth the same course of nature, where as by mutacion of the world that hath ben before, we maye gather that there shall be a newnes hereafter. And like as the mutacion chaunced, what tyme they looked not for it that I sayd after theyr owne splyte lustes, euen so shall the nouacion happen, whether we beleue it, or not beleue it. For this thing they are not ware of, or (as I suppose rather) they dissemble to knowe, that the heuens were created long ago, and also the earthe, which the waters, wherewith it was couered, made bare, a great poynt of waters also hanging alofte. And when mankynde was almoste altogether defiled with vices, God beinge offended, sent the flood and destroyed the world of that tyme, reseruinge only right persons, which had folowed innocency.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .ii. Epistle

This vniuersall iudgement God exercised at that tyme, in poueraging and re-
newing the earth through water. When the heauens concyue perill as they
were created, and they are expected to spye, by the whiche they shall also be pur-
ged in the daye of iudgement, when the wicked shall be destroyed by fyre, like as
in tynes past they perished by water. Forasmuche than as it is a thing moche
certain that that daye shall come, it maketh no matter, whether it come later or
sooner: This only standeth vs in hande to proude so, that when so euer it co-
meth, it fynde not vs burcad, nor in our conceytes stanke some thinges long,
or some thinges shorte: but vnto God there is nothing, neyther shorte nor long.
In his promises he foloweth not the appetites of vs, but his owne eternall &
vunchangeable decreed counsaill, vnto whome nothyng is neither past nor to
come, but all thinges are present. But vnto vs what is fact he hath promised, he
exhibereth in the tyme that he hath appointed before hande to him self. For euen,
wh he is al is one whether there be one daye past or a thousand yeres. With the
same faithfull assurdenes doeth he performe the thing whiche he performeth the
later, that he doeth the thing he doeth more speedilye. For as concerning him
selfe, he hath performed euen now the thing, that he hath purposed to per-
forme. For he doeth not change his purpose and after the maner of delayers
prologue and put of his promise as some falsly iudge of him, measuring God
after their owne condirions: but he pfermeth the space to be longer, somtimes
for pain sake, because vpon his tender mercye and gentlenes he would haue
none to perishe, but is desirous to haue all men once to repent, that those whiche
perishe, haue no cause to fynde fault that they wanted space to change their
life in to better. And that daye shall come vnto vs, and shall come creeping
vpon men, none otherwise, than a thefe in the night cometh vpon them that are
a sleape. In that daye there shall be so greete violence of fyre, that the heauens
shall passe with a nighte greete voyce in to an other kinde: But the elementes,
wher vpon this lower world consisteth, shall be dissolved with heat: and finally
the earth, and the thinges therein conteyned, shall be burned with fyre, and all
the whole nature of thinges shall be cleane purged. And if it bee of necessite,
that all thinges shall be so pure, that these thinges shall also be dissolved, whiche
offende not: howe much standeth it vs in hande diligently to endeavour, that
that daye maye fynde vs thoroughly purged and vpright in all helmes of life,
and in all studious assayses of godlynes. In the meane season this muste be
with muche speedynes forsaide, that you be always in a readynes, when so euer
that daye shall come, whose straighe iudgement no manne shall be able
to scape: whiche shall suffre no thyng to be impure, so muche, that
the heuens must be dissolved with fyre, and the elementes con-
strayned to melt with heat. And after this, we loke, accord-
yng to his promise, for new heuens and a new
earth, that haue no corrupcion, no fault: that
we, in whom shall be no corruptiōne,
maye haue the fruition of
them being vncorrupt.

C Dearely beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, howe that one daye is with the
 Lord, as a thousande yeare, and a thousande yeare as one daye. The Lord hath pro-
 mised to not flacke, as some men count slackes: but is patient to be waiched: for as much as **The first.**
 he would haue no man lost: but will receaue all men to repentance. Wherefore the daye
 of the Lord will come as a theefe in the night, in the whiche daye the heaues shall passe
 awaye in maner of a tempest, and the elements shall melt with heate, the earth also
 and the mochaes that are therein shall burne. Being then that all these thinges shall pe-
 rish, what maner persons ought ye to be in holy conuersation and godly waiting for
 and waiting vnto the cominge of the daye of God, by whom the heaues shall perishe
 with fyre, and the elements shall melt with heate. Wherefore, we (accordinge to his
 promise) loke for a new heaue and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousnesse. Where-
 fore dearely beloved, (seeing that ye loke for) suche thinges, be diligent that ye maye be founde
 of him in peace, without spotte and unspotted. And suppose that the longe sufferinge of
 the Lord is saluation, such as our dearely beloved brother Paule also accordinge to the
 mysedome geueth vnto him; hath written vnto you, yea, almost in euery epistle, speakinge
 of suche thinges: amonge whiche are many thinges hard to be vnderstande, whiche they
 that are vnicuersal, and vnsutable, peruers, as they do also the other scriptures vnto their
 owne destruction. Ye therfore beloved (seeing ye be waiched at these thinges) be warr, lest ye
 (with other men) be also plucked awaye (knowe the creature of the wyches, and fall from
 your owne steadfastnes. Whar growe in peace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and sauiour
 Jesus Christ. To whom be glorye bothe nowe and for euer. Amen.

Wherefore most dearely beloved brethren, haue this so fearfull a iudgement
 alwayes before your eyes, and geue diligence, that when the so, be cometh, he
 maye finde you pure and vnblander. not onely before menne, whose iudge-
 mētes are many tymes deceaued, but also before hi. For he is pure in deede, that
 is pure in the iudgement of God. And although the perabundance it be long ere
 that daye come, construe it not so, as though he would not come at all, but
 conspice that this tender sufferance of the Lord, wherewith he geueth all men
 space to repent, doeth care for mannes saluation: of whiche matters our mooste
 deare brother and folowe in office, Paule wrote vnto you, so muche the more
 habundantly, as God gaue him the more plentifully gyfte of wysedome: and in
 almost all his epistles exhorteth you to loke for this daye, sometime speakinge
 after suche a sorte, as though the daye of the Lord were already now at hande:
 that he might the rather pyncke you forwarde to the studye of godlynes, where
 as that daye (because it is vncertaine) ought to be looked for, so as though he
 would come this daye, but yet after suche wyse, that no man prescribe a tyme
 certaine. These and some other matters Paule accordinge to his high wysedome,
 myngled in his epistles. And whereas he spake them most rightly that could
 be, yet the ignorant and inconstant persons heare them with a peruerse in-
 terpretation, as they doe the other scriptures, to their owne destruction, that the
 thing whiche is healte vnto the good, maye be turned, through their owne
 faulte, in to venome vnto them. Wherefore brethren, since you are so many waies
 warned before hande bothe of me and of Paule, take heed, that you be not de-
 ceued, as other are, with the fraude of adominable men, and fall awaye from
 your substantiall steadfastnes, whiche you haue expressed yet hetherto: but ra-
 ther geue diligence, that you maye continually increase and goe forwarde in
 the giftes and knowledge of our Lord and sauiour Jesus Christ, vnto whom
 be glorye bothe now in this lyfe, and for euer without ende. Amen.

Thus endeth the Paraphrase vpon
 the seconde Epistle of the
 apostle S. Peter.